



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

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News Release

ICE DEPORTS SOUTH AFRICAN WOMAN AFTER APPREHENSION AT THE TEXAS BORDER

Ahmed Convicted for False Statements and Misuse of Passport

HOUSTON—U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials today deported Farida Goolam Mahomed Ahmed, 49, to her native country of South Africa following her arrest, conviction and sentencing on criminal charges of illegal entry into the United States, making false statements to federal authorities and misuse of an altered South African passport found in her possession.

ICE Detention and Removal Operations officers turned over Ahmed to South African authorities upon arrival in South Africa.

“By removing foreign nationals who commit crimes in this country we are restoring integrity to our immigration system and enhancing security.” said Charles Arendale, Field Office Director for the ICE Houston Detention and Removal Operations office. “This case is an excellent example of how multiple layers of security work. Ahmed was captured by U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials and then was processed, charged and removed under ICE. Through coordinating efforts, ICE has removed a record number of aliens in the past year, the majority of whom are convicted criminals.”

Ahmed was arrested July 19 by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials at the airport in McAllen, Texas, upon attempting to board a flight to Houston en route to New York City. At the time, Ahmed told CBP Border Patrol agents she had a valid visa, but records checks determined otherwise. Further inspection revealed three pages of her passport had been removed, and she was in possession of a bag of wet clothing, which CBP officials learned that she was wearing when she swam across the Rio Grande River from Mexico earlier that day. She was also carrying \$6,300 dollars, flight itineraries, a camera and a cell phone.

An Emirates Airline itinerary dated July 8 in Ahmed's name showed she had traveled from Johannesburg, South Africa, to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, then to London, England (Gatwick), and then a second itinerary July 14 from London (Heathrow) to Mexico City, Mexico. FBI and ICE officials conducted a follow-up investigation into Ahmed that eventually resulted in criminal charges against her. On Aug. 16, a grand jury in the Southern District of Texas returned an indictment charging Ahmed with violating Title 8, USC, Section 1325 (Illegal Entry into the U.S.), Title 18, USC, Section 1001 (False Statements), and Title 18, USC, Section 1546 (Misuse of Visas or Passports).

Ahmed pleaded guilty Sept. 27 to all three counts in the August indictment. Ahmed was sentenced to time served in federal court in the Southern District of Texas on Dec. 7. The following day, Ahmed was transferred to the custody of ICE Detention and Removal Operations pending immigration removal proceedings.

On Dec. 22 a federal immigration judge in Houston ordered Ahmed removed from the United States. She waived her right to appeal the judge's decision and remained in ICE custody until her removal.

Due to her convictions and formal deportation, Ahmed is barred from legally re-entering the United States for 10 years.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.